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MEMBER OF CONGRESS

COMMITTEE ON NATURAL RESOURCES
SUBCOMMITTEE FOR INDIGENOUS PEOPLES
OF THE UNITED STATES
SUBCOMMITTEE ON WATER, OCEANS, AND WILDLIFE

COMMITTEE ON SCIENCE, SPACE
AND TECHNOLOGY
SUBCOMMITTEE ON ENERGY
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Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515-3101

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October 13, 2022

Dear President Joseph R. Biden:

I am grateful for the strong commitment that you and your Administration have demonstrated to strengthening our Nation-to-Nation relationships and consultation with Tribal governments. During your first week in office, you signed a Presidential Memorandum committing to fulfill our federal trust and treaty responsibilities, respect Tribal sovereignty, and conduct regular, meaningful, and robust Tribal consultations. The Biden-Harris Administration, in partnership with Congress, has taken historic actions to address climate change and infrastructure needs across the United States and Indian Country, including the passage of the largest investments in climate action ever in the recently passed Inflation Reduction Act and historic investments in climate resilience in Indian Country. Over \$13 billion in Tribal set-asides in the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act will support Tribal Nations in building critical infrastructure, including climate resilience across all sectors. I am proud to work in partnership with the Administration to honor our commitment to Tribal Nations and elevate Tribal sovereignty and voices and write to request actions to further amplify Indigenous Nations and voices on a global scale as we are working to address the impacts of climate change.

As your Administration has demonstrated through the biggest investment in climate action in history, climate change is the single greatest threat that we face globally. We must act now, act boldly, and act on a global scale. The United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change is designed to bring together important stakeholders across the globe to address the impacts of climate change. I write to request greater representation of voices from Indigenous Nations and communities in the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, including during the upcoming 27th session of the Conference of the Parties in Sharm El-Sheikh.

From rising seas and storm surges that threaten Indigenous communities in the Arctic, South Pacific, and coastal regions to dwindling snowpack and river flows that threaten the livelihoods and ways of life of Indigenous communities in the Rocky Mountains and Southwest, our Indigenous communities face existential threats from the growing impacts of climate change. In the face of these threats, our Indigenous communities are resilient, and traditional knowledge and practices passed down for generations are critical to global resilience. Indigenous communities currently protect 80 percent of our global biodiversity. Indigenous communities have lived on and managed lands and waters since time immemorial and continue to be at the forefront of combatting climate change and protecting these precious lands, waters, and coastlines. Indigenous leadership on climate action must be centered at the highest levels of global decision-making.

I humbly request that, ahead of this year's United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change Conference of Parties, your Administration organize a meeting to consult with and center the leadership of Indigenous Nations and hear the visions, priorities, and concerns of leaders and technical representatives from national, regional, and local Indigenous organizations and representatives. Specifically, I would like to see this meeting:

- Ensure inclusive, meaningful, and adequately resourced Indigenous consultation and engagement that prioritizes collaborative planning and participation in decision making;

- Share information and jointly develop recommendations and meaningful actions to reduce global emissions and address local climate resilience;
- Jointly develop recommendations and meaningful actions to create or dedicate funding to support climate-vulnerable Indigenous communities;
- Jointly develop meaningful approaches to increase representation of Indigenous Peoples across the world and support their positions as leaders on climate action at the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change Conferences of Parties and other climate activities; and
- Provide local and regional views, perspectives, and proposals on the implementation of the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change.

Thank you for your work elevating Indigenous leadership in the climate space, and I look forward to continuing this important work.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Melanie A. Stansbury". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Melanie Stansbury
Member of Congress

Cc: Secretary John F. Kerry, Special Presidential Envoy for Climate